

A CREATIVE STREET & OPEN DOORS



LOCAL KIDS DEFACE HACKNEY HOUSE !

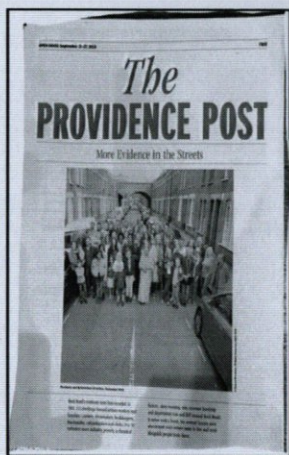
BECK ROAD 19

Open House London, Beck Road, Hackney, E8 4RE

FRIDAY 20TH
SATURDAY 21ST
SUNDAY 22ND
SEPTEMBER
2019



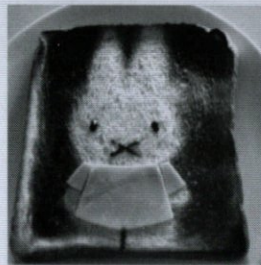
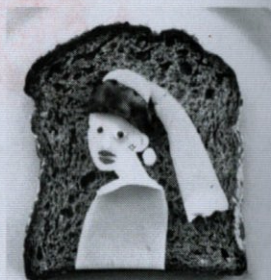
Residents and By Beck Road 19 Artists, September 2019
Photo credit: Edward Woodman, © 2019 Edward Woodman.



From: Robert Elms

Open House London:
Alastair Carruthers and
Kathryn Lovering

on the radio



"I often get asked to come and talk at art schools," he says "and I rarely get asked back, because the first thing I always say is, I'm here to persuade you not to have a job."

BRIAN ENO

When industrial musicians Throbbing Gristle moved into Beck road in 1974 Hackney was a different place. Neglected for many years there were numerous squatted and cheap buildings available for aspiring artists and musicians. As John Savage notes in the introduction to Simon Ford's *The Wreckers of Civilisation; The story of COUM Transmissions and Throbbing Gristle*, "there was liberation in decay"

Squatting had been an issue since the post war years when thousands of returning servicemen suddenly found themselves homeless. By the 60's There were thousands of empty properties across London yet families were routinely evicted. **Squatting (BFI 1970)** uses Godardian Agit-prop techniques to illustrate the fate of an Irish family facing eviction in Ladbroke Grove. It also features the attempts by a left wing group of activists in Chingford to take over vacant GPO properties. They show great ingenuity to move from property to property and stay loosely within the law. The full local news report of their antics can be found on Adam Curtis' blog.

By the 1960's squatting was common across London though those of an artistic bent tended to prefer West London to East. In **Getting it Straight in Notting Hill Gate(1970)** we see a group of artists and musicians re-taking old Rachman properties to explore their artistic bents or 'unlearning everything they had learnt at art school' as one inhabitant put it. The film is famous for a tracking shot through Portobello market which shows the area in its full multiracial splendour, rough around the edges but with clusters of young hipsters exchanging cultural knowledge "I hear The Doors are touring Europe." The talk is that things are getting heavy following the raid on the Mangrove restaurant, Paddy's taxi cruises the streets, though one suspects the West Indian inhabitants have more to fear than these trusty types.

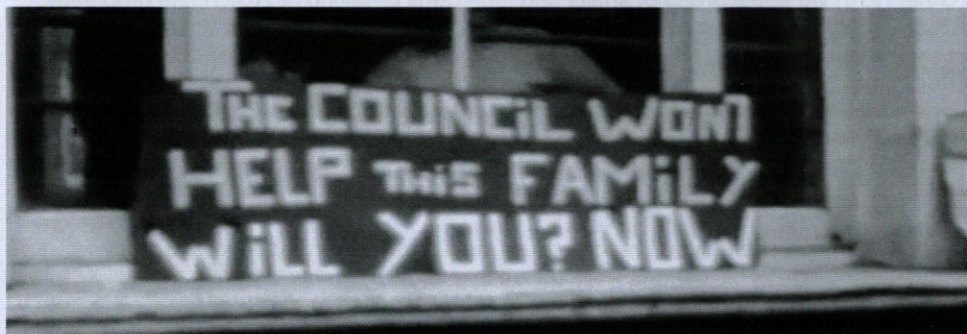
Notting Hill was where Jake Prescott a key member of the Angry brigade was arrested in 1971. The rest of his cohorts were based in a squat in Amhurst Rd. Graham Carr's documentary, **The Angry Brigade; The Spectacular Rise and Fall of Britain's First Urban Guerilla Group (1972)** remains the best overview of the affair. Inspired by Spanish anarchists as well as Guy Debord's ideas on the Spectacular Society they started a minor bombing campaign in the name of anarchy and freedom. Carr's film shows us how Scotland Yard tried to penetrate the communes across London even raiding the offices of Time Out.

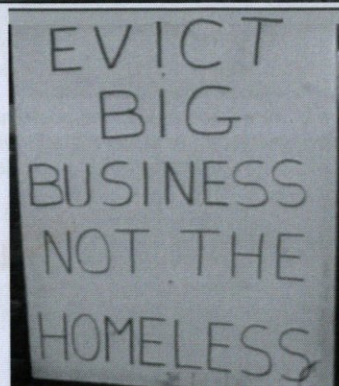
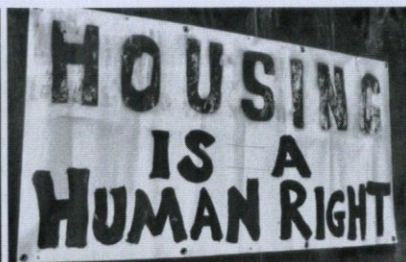
Just across the borough another group of activists were working at ground level to help the dispossessed and poor. On an estate in Haggerston they set up a food CO-OP for those in need of it. **Hackney Food CO-OP (4 Corners 1973)**. The estate had a bad rep and the local businesses weren't impressed but it illustrates the solidarity the activists had with local people at the time. A year later a free concert in Bethnal Green was headlined not by a young Elvis Costello but local Bengali musicians. Stalls offering services included the Benefits Claimants union designed to help those on Social security. There seemed to be a brief uniting of causes in the East of the City.

Punk brought a different kind of squat scene to London one which appeared in the surface to be not so conducive to hippy ideals. The hippies argued that the punks brought harder drugs to the scene and weakened it. However, a few of the older heads kept things focused. Penny Rimbaud of anarcho-punk band Crass had been involved in the Stonehenge free festival in the early seventies. He lived in a commune in the grounds of Dial house. He still lives there today and stick to the same ideals of communal living. Nothing should ever happen by design" he says in **My Place (2011)**, instead activities such as painting cooking building contribute to the collective good. "It's about creating a resonance."

By the 1980's Genesis P-Orridge had moved from Beck Rd (Cosey left in 1978). It was now sublet by filmmaker Nick Abrahams and musician Barry from Add N to X. Genesis had kindly left them a hand grenade under the floorboards an emblematic baton which they gratefully lobbed to the authorities. **London Art Tripping (Stewart Home 2006)**. In Home's series of interviews Jeremy Deller talks about his fascination with another infamous commune which he later lived in, that of The Black Panthers activist Michael X who lived in a Holloway flat where he received visits from John and Yoko amongst other luminaries .

In the late 80's there was a smattering of funding available for community art funding projects. One such was Pyramid Arts in Dalston set up to be a performing arts school for anyone who was interested. It features in **The Bastille Concerto (Collins & Whitter 2017)**. The percussion course was led by legendary American drummer Clifford





Jarvis fresh from duties with the Sun Ra Arkestra. Jarvis has been an early student at Berklee College which started in similar austere surroundings but ended up becoming the premier music college in the US. Many of the students at Pyramid such as guitarist Alan Weekes went on to become prime exponents in their field.

Pyramid was shut down in the mid 90's just as Dalston started to evolve from the place of ruins documented by Patrick Wright in his 1991 book **The Last Days of London** to an attractive location for aspiring media types as well as artists. Things were now moving fast.

London Fields had been the subject of a silly British film in the 1980s but by 2005 the cameras were focussed on Tony's Café in Broadway market. **The Battle for Broadway Market**, (Emily James 2006)

Tony was evicted from his café by a local property Developer who had benefited from Hackney's wholesale selling off property in the early millennium, under the instructions of John Prescott. Tony along with Spirit who ran a West Indian health food shop at the other end of the market were caught out by these real estate shenanigans. Tony's was squatted amid much publicity including articles in German and Italian broadsheets. The activists were reminiscent of those Chingford squatters in the late 60's in their ingenuity. had been evicted they moved back in and rebuilt the café. It ended badly but briefly the local community was united in fighting the injustice.

Many of the squatters of Tony's Café were European, a trend which grew in the noughties. In **Squatting in London (2009)** a couple of Basque squatters talk about how London has become "a shop window of today's society, the capital of the kind of culture we live in" as such as it was fertile ground for a cultural war which challenged the dominant ideology.

In a talk "Basic Income: How do we get there?" in 2015, Brian Eno talks of how the way to challenge this hegemony is to "not get a job" rightly pointing to the constraints this place not only on creativity but also communal thinking. He denounces the ideas of genius expounded by the media (think the current idolisation of Dominic Cummings). For Eno genius should be replaced by 'scenius.' Where individuals contribute their skills to a collective to produce something far more interesting.

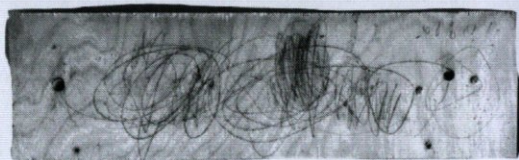
It is probably too late for such a scene to flower in Hackney but Britain is full of towns with the space to allow for a collective flowering John Doran touches on this in his Radio 4 series **New Weird Britain**. Areas were decimated in the post-Thatcher era now cry out for an identity and there are plenty of young artists willing to fill the void.

Genesis P-Orridge himself once said 'alternative arts need a network'. We may have lost cheap living but the one thing we have gained for better or worse is digital access to like minded thinkers. It is a curse but also an opportunity for new communities to sprout.

The time belongs to those who act on this.

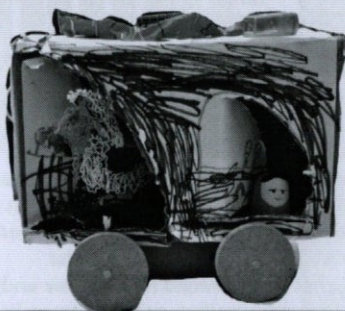
Film List

Hackney Food CO-OP 1973
Getting it Straight in Notting Hill Gate-1970
Squatting BFI 1970
London Art tripping 2006
Squatting in London 2009
The Angry Brigade 1972
My place- Penny Rimbaud 2011
Brian Eno- Royal Academy address



SOME MORE BECK ROAD KIDS ART

2019



7th and 8th December 2019

Saturday: Reading & Performance all day

Sunday: ASP Fair 11am - 7pm

In partnership with
ICA

Institute of Contemporary Arts
The Mall
SW1Y 5AH



www.aspfair.uk
info@aspfair.uk



ARTIST SELF-PUBLISHERS' FAIR
-THE 5TH-

Ink, Paper + Print

Illustration & Print Fair
Sat 21st & Sun 22nd September
Towner Art Gallery, College Road
EASTBOURNE, BN21 4JJ

DIY ART MARKET

Saturday 28th September, 11-6
Unit 8, Copeland Road,
PECKHAM London SE15 3SN

Ink Paper + Print

Illustration & Print Fair
Guildhall, CAMBRIDGE
Sat 9 & Sun 10 November

Small Publishers Fair

Fri 15th & Sat 16th November
11am - 7pm Daily
Conway Hall, Red Lion Square
Holborn, London, WC1R 4RL

DIY ART MARKET

Sat 7th Dec, 11-6, £1 entry
Rich Mix, 35-47 Bethnal Green Rd.
London, E1 6LA

ASP5 ARTIST SELF-PUBLISHERS FAIR

Sat 7th Dec, Readings & Performances all day
Sun 8th Dec, ASP Fair 11-7
ICA, The Mall, London, SW1Y 5AH

PUNK ROCK

Squatting

Empty Houses and Homeless People
Squatting in Hackney 1983- 1985

There is a place called home....those lucky enough to have one (or a place they call 'my home') will know that this is a essential sanctuary and haven from the outside world (neighbours allowing....some/most of the time). Way back 30 years ago the idea of living without water, electric, several windows and/or doors was not that appealing to me in all honesty. This was due to my homely 'home' circumstance which was unceremoniously unscripted due to change after I head-first dived in to sample that crazy unpredictable lifestyle known by a few as 'squatting'.

Pembury Estate (Hackney, London)....July 1983)

It was around July, and summertime by the time the 'Caledonian Roaders' weaved a route to Hackney and squatted alongside The Assassins of Hope (just a floor above on the same block). It was number 49 for me (& Palmer, from Kent) and we shared a place that was the best so far (as it was the first 'council' house we squatted).

It was on the fourth floor of a 'U' shaped estate block and seemed quite quiet for a council estate. It had 2 rooms and a fitted kitchen with electric and gas and was well superb indeed. Of course our possessions were a handful but we had music and a mattress and heat and shelter. We had people 'staying', a while and or 'visiting' namely Claire (Staples, from Peterborough I think?), Tinsel (again originally from Welwyn Garden City), Cheryl 'Hardcore' Harding and Karen (from Sheffield). Also on our block were three Assassins of Hope...namely being Mike (Mahon who went out with) Chantal (I think her real name may have been 'Alice' in Hackneyland) and also 'Jozi' (both the girls sang for AOH and Mike drummed the drums. 'Jozi' I liked and she had a 'white pet rat called 'Bandit'.

They had a three roomed squat (Number 12) and it had 'wooden curtains')...meaning it was boarded up. Life there was great as more people turned up the longer we stayed and squatted there. A fair few from the 'Woking' area turned up (25 miles south-west of London) and set up a squat or two up a floor from me and Palmer together...the faces were named Nick (real name Nicholas Nicolaides), Olly (Bucket...real name Simon Parrish), a guy called 'Kev' and he bullshitted so much unrecyclable manure from his mouth that he drummed for Siouxsie and the Banshees and a soft guy called 'George' who looked like a shy smiling owl with green hair and the infamous glue-sniffer elect of Al 'instant breadbag-swiper' Keating.

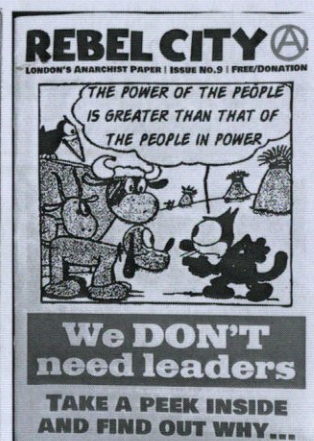
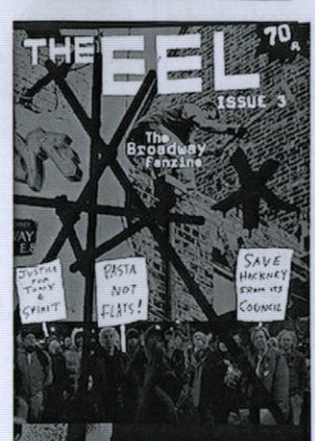
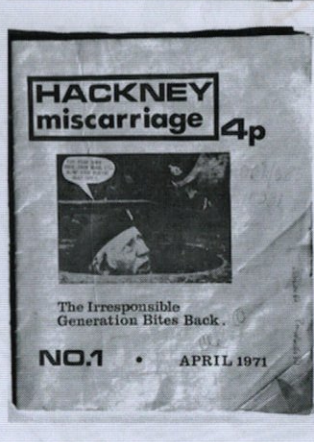
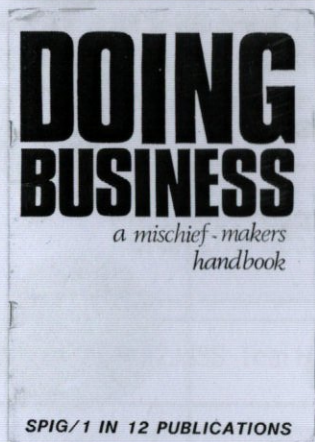
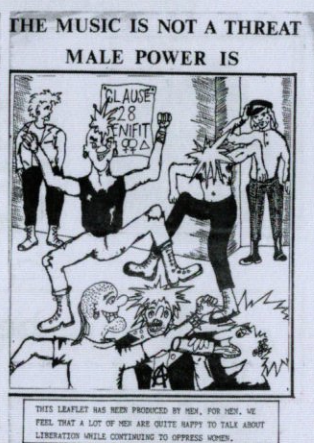
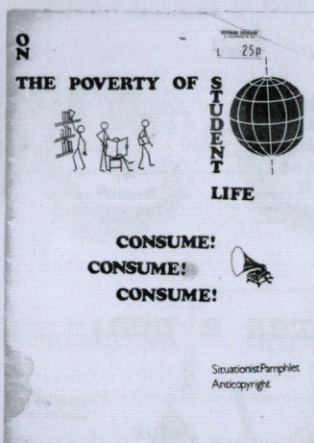
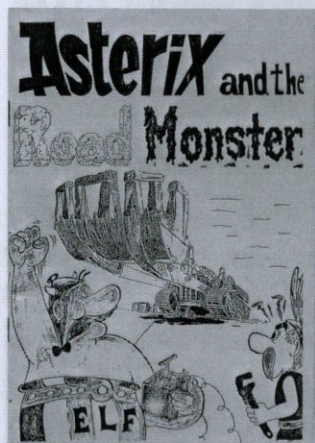
Our stay on this estate (block) was pretty calm and long...I think people started to be turfed-out as the summer was fading into winter '83...maybe around September or October...so a summers gigging was based back in Hackers' (Hackney) for us. If you are wondering where the seeds of the (in)famous Hackney Hell Crew (or Hackney Hell Krew if you must pander to the Germanic Street bleachers) were sewn...then I guess from maybe Huntingdon Street and a culmination of the Woking lot heading over to our estate block...we then moved to our next squat and thats where it started to actually 'bear/bare punk fruit'...!!

As Alien and Martin Squarehead were absent from Hackney until we opened up a few squats...they then joined us there in the coming months. Alien was having some big time trouble (squatting) at a house near Huntingdon Street I think with some skagheeds and Martin square head was in a flat near Bloomsbury Peace Centre (complete with drum kit set-up in the front room...as you do...!!).

It needed (of course the manic unbridled and unharnessed hilarity of) Alien to mean the 'Hackney Hell Crew' actually could ever have existed in the first place...he (for me) was the nuclei around all that spun forth came...Martin 'Squarehead' was as funny...but was dry, slow and much more well timed...infact I thought he could have tied up his horse outside he was so much a punk-cowboy...

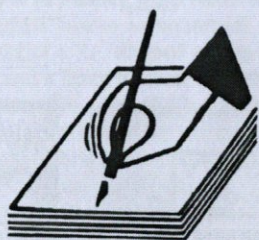
by Anthony 'Treeramp' Lynch, read more here:-

<https://punk-rock-photography.weebly.com/squatting.html>





heres a pen,



and

some

paper,

and a typewriter,



Now start your zine



LINKS

BITLY CODES ARE SHORTENED WEB ADDRESSES

How to survive as an artist in Britain

<https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/24688/1...>

[ly/2moT5W7](https://www.dazeddigital.com/artsandculture/article/24688/1...)



TORY POLITICIAN SAYS, WE DONT NEED WORK- SHOPS

Don't give up the day job - how artists
make a living

<https://bit.ly/2aeY1CA>

RAILWAY ARCHES NOW OWNED BY AMERICAN COMPANY BLACKSTONE EQUITY GROUP 85% RENT INCREASE

The increase came months before Network Rail announced the sale of thousands of railway arches in a £1.46bn deal. ... In September this year Network Rail announced the sale of 5,200 commercial units, predominantly converted railway arches, to property investors Toleraal Trillium and private equity group Blackstone. 14 Dec 2016



Brian Eno- best creative work,don't get a job. <https://bit.ly/2JI2x3J>

<https://bit.ly/2m2Jd3S> Tom Hunter Squatting in the 90's

<http://thelostbyway.com/tag/tottenham-marshes>

<https://bit.ly/2mgH5pp>

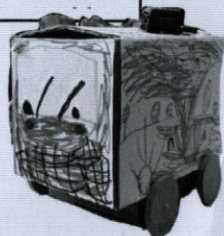
WHAT IS ANARCHY

<https://bit.ly/2uNxwSW>

Anarchism and the Spanish Civil War

POLITICIANS ARE YOUR NEW LANDORDS

Margaret Thatcher, who scrapped Britain's previous system of rent controls in 1988. ... Before free market reforms introduced by Margaret Thatcher in the Housing Act 1988, local authority rent officers had the ability to negotiate significantly lower rents for private tenants. 3 Jan 2015



LOOKING BACK, FORWARDS AND INSIDE



47 BECK ROAD IN 1998 ↑↑ AND IN 2019 ↑↑

LOOK HERE'S WHAT WE MADE